

FY 2013 ANNUAL WORK PLAN FOR THE NEW YORK—NEW JERSEY HARBOR & ESTUARY PROGRAM

This proposed Work Plan has been prepared by the Hudson River Foundation for Fiscal Year 2013 (FY 13) of the New York-New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program (HEP).

The Work Plan for FY 2013 includes the following items:

- (1) A contract with Regional Plan Association to cover Program Director services on a part time basis from December 1 2013 to April 2014;
- (2) Staff support for continued program activities including management of the still active FY 11 and FY 12 stewardship grants program and other on-going programs, projects and outreach for period starting April 2014;
- (3) Launching of a new project in partnership with Columbia University: Creation of a Standard Protocol for Assessing Ecologically Enhanced Urban Shorelines;
- (4) Targeted meetings with stakeholders including an Urban Shorelines Roundtable; and
- (5) Development of a Pathogen Monitoring Online Data Tool so that results of an existing citizens monitoring program can be shared.

The Hudson River Foundation will provide a match for the CWA 320 funds through their support of awards for scientific research related to understanding the Hudson River ecosystem. These awards are detailed below.

Description of Workplan Activities

Project/Activity #1: HEP PT Program Director Services 12/1/13 – 4/2014

Project/Activity Purpose and Description:

The first quarter of 2014 represents a unique opportunity for HEP to engage its partners and other key stakeholders and consider how its organizational structure and budget can meet the goals of 2011- 2015 Action Agenda and beyond. Structured outreach and interviews and discussions with the policy and management committees will be used to create two documents: (1) A Strategic Plan that sets HEP's near-term organizational and programmatic goals based on partner priorities and status of the 2011- 2015 Action Plan; (2) A business plan including a strategy for securing additional financial and technical resources and revised HEP operating procedures. Possible sources of financial and technical assistance include leveraging mitigation and settlement funds, including funding already managed by the Hudson River Foundation; government contracts; congressional leadership; and private philanthropy.

These documents will be the basis of the proposed FY 2014 Work Plan and any subsequent revisions based on the results of the Novation process that will disburse the balance of funds from NEIWPCC to HRF once current contract obligations are met.

Other tasks performed include overall management of HEP Office including staffing of the Management Committee and Policy Committee; production of HEP Management Conference outputs; interacting with chairs of work groups to ensure activities are consistent with HEP goals; communication among stakeholders; preparing annual Work Plan, budget and implementation Review; technical, outreach, and communication elements of the program; and managing grants and contracts awarded by HEP office.

This work will require travel to Washington DC for the annual meeting of the National Estuary Program directors, Restore America's Estuaries as well as site visits throughout estuary watershed to meet with current and prospective partners.

Partners and Their Role(s): These services will be provided by the incoming Program Director, Robert Pirani through a contract by the Hudson River Foundation with the Regional Plan Association.

Outputs/Deliverables: Primary outputs include the creation of a Strategic Plan and a Business Plan for HEP and the FY 2014 Work Plan.

Estimated Milestones: Draft and final plans will be produced in April 2014.

Project/Activity #2: HEP Program Director, Program Associate and Restoration Coordinator Positions starting 4/14.

Project/Activity Purpose and Description: HRF will support salary, fringe benefits, office supplies, and operational costs for the HEP office, including Program Director, Associate and Restoration Coordinator positions at the HRF office starting 4/14.

Responsibilities of the Program Director include: overall management of HEP Office including communication among stakeholders; facilitating the production of HEP Management Conference outputs; staffing Management Committee and acting as liaison to Policy Committee; interacting with chairs of work groups to ensure activities are consistent with HEP goals; in consultation with the Management Conference, preparing the annual Work Plan, budget and implementation review; overseeing technical, outreach, and communication elements of the program; manages grants and contracts awarded by HEP office; supervision of Associate and Restoration Coordinator and other staff.

Responsibilities of the HEP associate include: working with NEIWPCC Lowell staff to manage the remaining stewardship small grant program and the Pathogens Monitoring grant, manage the development of an Online Data Tool to display data from the Pathogens Monitoring grant, supporting technical workgroups and the Citizens Advisory Committee, managing the production of program publications, preparing annual programmatic reports to EPA, and assisting the HEP office with administrative and other duties as necessary. In addition, staff will work with the

Management Conference to implement other actions and studies in the CCMP. Some of these items are being funded by other sources, while still others do not require much funding, but do require significant agency or volunteer time.

Responsibilities of the HEP restoration coordinator include: providing technical and administrative support to the Restoration Workgroup, acting as liaison to the online mapping contractor, compiling and providing periodic status reports on acquisitions and restoration activities, working in coordination with other partners to develop site specific restoration plans, working with NEIWPCC Lowell staff to coordinate remaining habitat restoration and public access grant programs, working with partners to develop educational/communication products or activities to promote habitat restoration, working with partners to develop and implement annual Work Plan for habitat, and assisting the HEP office with administrative and other duties as necessary.

Travel funds will allow for staff participation in relevant local, regional, and national meetings. Other – Printing and Reproductions/Mailing Funds will be used to support staff activities.

The indirect charges cover expenses related to three employees being housed at HRF. This includes the costs of administering and housing the program and staff including contract management, mailroom, cleaning, telephone, office supplies, software, file servers, computers, copiers, email, long distance telephone, and teleconferencing.

Partners and Their Role(s): This work will be carried by HEP Office staff employed by the Hudson River Foundation.

Outputs/Deliverables: Staff will be responsible for a variety of outputs and products including execution of proposed strategic and business plans, development and management of financial agreements, review of grant deliverables and draft Quality Assurance Project Plans, various support materials for work groups, program newsletter, programmatic tracking, habitat restoration tracking, working with partners to complete new and existing restoration, stewardship and public access projects, etc.

Estimated Milestones: The new Program Director will be full time starting April 2014. It is anticipated that the other staff will move from EPA Region II offices to the Hudson River Foundation office in April 2014.

Project/Activity #3: Standard Protocol for Assessing the Habitat Quality of Ecologically Enhanced Urban Shorelines

Project/Activity Purpose and Description: This project is designed to advance the *Shorelines and Shallows* TEC by gaining information on the ecology of the Harbor Estuary's urban edge and urban nearshore zone. The monitoring protocol developed through this project will be suitable to assess various shoreline types and treatments and

provide information to help evaluate the comparative value of proposed ecological enhancement techniques. The project was approved and partially funded under the FY 12 Work Plan.

The major goals for this project include:

Near-term

- Develop a protocol to assess the comparative habitat value of various shoreline stabilization techniques, with an emphasis on those in the urban New York-New Jersey core area (e.g. high wave energy conditions, near-vertical slope, moderate-high salinity).
- Design a protocol that is feasible to conduct relatively quickly at a range of typical site types and applicable to the physical and geomorphological conditions experienced in the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary.
- Pilot the protocol in the field in the NY-NJ Harbor Estuary

Long-term

- Be a first step toward a standard way to monitor the habitat quality of various shoreline types and ecological enhancement techniques.
- Inform decision-making by regulatory agencies, engineers, and land owners regarding the habitat value and habitat exchange considerations of emerging and existing techniques.
- Be useful for building a library of ecological enhancements for comparison as our region begins to implement projects that help to achieve the target goals described in the Hudson-Raritan Estuary Comprehensive Restoration Plan *Shorelines and Shallows* Target Ecosystem Characteristic.

Partners and Their Role(s): NEIWPCC and HEP requested proposals for this project in the summer of 2013. A peer review panel selected a team of researchers led by Colombia University.

Outputs/Deliverables: The primary deliverable for this project will be a report detailing the developed standard assessment protocol, as well as the data associated with the series of completed pilot projects.

Estimated Milestones: The team is expected to meet with the Advisory Committee in early 2014 and simultaneously develop a quality assurance project plan. Field data are expected to begin collection in June and be completed by the end of the summer. A report will be finalized by the Fall, 2014.

Project/Activity #4: Targeted Outreach on Key HEP Topics.

Objectives: The broad objectives of this activity are to enhance HEPs visibility within the broader harbor and estuary community while advancing progress on specific Action

Agenda goals. The specific two tasks proposed are a by-invitation workshop to advance options for providing improved habitat values for urban shorelines and sponsorship of forums or panel discussions intended to increase awareness of HEP's mission and opportunities in the broader waterfront community in light of its new management structure.

Project/Activity Purpose and Description:

At least two events would be used to anchor these efforts, detailed below:

- *Habitat on our Urban Shorelines Workshop* – The Harbor & Estuary Program's Restoration Work Group, in partnership with the Hudson River Foundation, will bring in experts to (1) discuss concerns about shoreline development, management issues and potential enhancement opportunities, (2) look at opportunities in the context of the existing management and regulatory framework and brainstorm ideas for adapting that framework to foster improved habitat decision, and (3) develop conceptual ideas to be tested moving forward. Prior to, and as preparation for, the workshop, HEP and a subset of Restoration Work Group members would select a few shoreline areas from various regional planning efforts (CRP, Comprehensive Waterfront Plan, etc.) to serve as case studies. These sites would demonstrate the range of shoreline conditions and types in the urban portion of the estuary, so that the discourse and conceptual ideas could be anchored around real examples and set the stage for future work.
- Additional forums or panels will be on topics to be determined and organized by HEP staff in the Spring and Summer of 2014 and be designed to increase awareness of HEP's mission and its new management arrangement. Specific topics could include the overall role of HEP in broadly advancing Clean Water Act goals, the experience of other National Estuary Programs, environmental justice issues, and/or a reporting on progress toward harbor restoration. This forums or panels may take place at the Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance's bi-annual conference, City of Water Day, or other existing venues.

Contracts with facility providers, travel and/or honoraria for conference speakers, and funds allocated for printing, reproductions, and mailing will be used to support this work.

Partners and Their Role(s):

- *Shoreline guidelines:* Lead coordination & management – Hudson River Foundation, in partnership with HEP, NEIWPCC, and HEP RWG
- *Additional Forums:* Lead coordination and management – HEP Staff in partnership with CAC, Metropolitan Waterfront Alliance, and other partners.

Outputs/Deliverables: Final reports would be developed for each of the activities.

Estimated Milestones: All activities would take place in Spring and Summer 2014.

Project/Activity #5: Pathogen Monitoring Online Data Tool

Objectives: Foster stewardship of the estuary's shared waterways by engaging local residents directly in environmental data collection, analysis and management, and by providing access to data in a user-friendly format.

Project/Activity Purpose and Description: HEP is separately funding a *Citizen Science Monitoring for Pathogen Indicators in NY-NJ Harbor Tributaries* project that is expected to engage four community groups in water quality monitoring with a focus on pathogen indicators. These funds will be allocated to a contractor to produce a user-friendly online display to make the data easily available in a clear, visually-compelling way for community members and other users. Grantees and the HEP office will collaborate with the contractor to develop a suitable tool for these purposes.

Partners and Their Role(s): HEP staff will manage the production of the display tool, working with a contractor in coordination with the four grantees and EPA with support for GIS and quality assurance requirements.

Outputs/Deliverables: online mapping tool displaying water quality data generated by citizen scientists in NY-NJ Harbor tributaries.

Estimated Milestones: The online display tool completed by Fall 2014.

FY 2013 Cost-Share

The FY 2013 CWA 320 funds will receive the required match from the Hudson River Foundation. The Hudson River Foundation will provide in kind match for the CWA 320 funds through their support of scientific research related to understanding the Hudson River ecosystem. The objectives of Foundation's grant programs and the geographic focus areas are consistent with, and complimentary to, the goals and objectives of the New York/New Jersey Harbor & Estuary Program. The Call for Proposals outlining the research objectives is available here:

http://www.hudsonriver.org/download/2013_HRFund_RFP.pdf.

The specific grants and their respective cost-share during the work plan period are listed below:

PI/INST.	TITLE	TOTAL GRANT AMOUNT	MATCH FOR WORK PLAN PERIOD
Able, Rutgers U.	Improvements to New York Harbor Fish Habitats: Evaluation of Essential Fish Habitat for Shallow Shorelines	\$211,083	\$83,547
Wirgin, NYU	Estimating effects of Hudson River contaminants and climate change on critical early life-stages of Atlantic and shortnose sturgeons	\$193,878	\$76,737
Geyer, Woods Hole	Sediment Delivery, Trapping and Storage during Extreme Flow Events in the Hudson River	\$219,946	\$87,055
Nitsche, Columbia U.	Assessing Impacts of Recent Storm Activity on Sediment Transport and Storage in the Hudson River	\$186,666	\$102,679
O'Mullan, Queens College	Sewage loading to the Hudson River as a determinant of microbial air quality: exploration of public health connections and monitoring approaches	\$179,489	\$76,098
Bailey, U. of Md.	Individual Movement Behaviors of New York Harbor Striped Bass and Their Response to Extreme Events	\$51,681	\$18,532
Schultz, U. of Conn.	Zebra Mussel Effects on Diet of Early-Stage Fishes in the Hudson River	\$170,170	\$67,353

MATCH TOTAL = \$512,000